

Balancing Work and Family Lesson Plan

Time Required: 2 Hours

Workshop Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop participants will be able to:

- Recognize the importance of managing work and family demands
- Set realistic work and family goals
- Develop an individualized work/family management plan
- Manage situations where work and family goals conflict with each other

Resources Needed:

Materials:

Nametags

Handouts:

Set #1

- Problem Solving
- Individualized Work Management Plan Worksheet (2)
- Individualized Family Management Plan Worksheet (2)
- Conflict Resolution as a Strategy for Balancing Work and Family
- Facts about Work and Family Life
- Resources

Set #2

- Family Calendar Message Center
- Agenda - Family Meetings
- Family Job List

Equipment:

Flip Chart

Flip Chart Markers

Dry Erase Board

Dry Erase Markers

I. Welcome and Introductions

A. Presenter(s)

Introduce yourself, giving details about your current position and any past experience that relates to this workshop. Welcome the participants to the workshop.

B. Participants

Ask participants to introduce themselves, stating their name, what they do, and their expectations for the workshop. Record expectations on flip chart.

II. Workshop Objectives

A. Review workshop objectives posted on a prepared flip chart or transparency. Then match the participants' expectations with the workshop objectives and identify expectations that will not be met. Solicit questions and/or comments concerning workshop objectives.

B. Provide an brief overview of the workshop.

III. Workshop Overview

A. Introduce the topic of balance by asking the following questions:

- *What is balance?*
- *Is absolute balance between work and family really achievable?*

Presentation Notes:

1. Balancing work and family obligations is an ongoing challenge for many in the workplace today.
2. When we think about the term "balance" what generally comes to mind is one's ability to equally distribute weight between two sides; to achieve equilibrium between two opposing forces.
3. The sometimes overwhelming demands coming from work and family situations may not lend themselves to absolute balance. Managing work and family demands is probably a more realistic concept.
4. We can use the following management strategies at work and at home.
 - Goal setting
 - Planning
 - Identifying Resources (sources of support)
 - Problem solving

- B. Emphasize the importance of managing work and family demands through goal setting and planning.

Presentation Notes:

1. Goal Setting

- It is important to set goals for ourselves at work and at home. Goals keep us focused on what needs to be accomplished and allows us to monitor our progress.
- It is equally important to establish goals that are realistic and measurable.
- Setting goals that are not realistic creates added stress.

2. Planning

- A plan for achieving each goal needs to be developed.
- Develop your plan to include the following components:
 - Objectives (steps you need to take to reach your goal)
 - Time Frames
 - Resources
- Identifying resources (support system)
- Establish a support system by assessing what is needed in order to achieve each of your goals. Support can come from many sources such as:
 - Workplace programs
 - Child care organizations
 - Elder care organizations
 - Community service organizations
 - Religious affiliations
 - Counselors/Therapists
 - Self help groups
 - Educational programs
 - Health care/Wellness programs
 - Emergency Services (day care, crisis hotlines, etc)
 - Workplace relationships
 - Personal relationships
 - Domestic services

3. Resources

Choose resources that are reliable and meet your needs as specifically as possible.

- C. Emphasize the value of including leisure, recreational and respite time in the management plan.

IV. Review Work/Family Resources

- A. Review resources stated in the handout -- add any resources that you think should be included.
- B. Invite the participants to share resource information.

V. Questions and Answers

- A. Open discussion to respond to participants' questions
- B. Questions that can be posed by presenter(s) include:
 - 1. What impressed you most in the workshop today?
 - 2. What action do you see yourself taking as a result of being in this workshop?

Problem Solving

- “Anything that can go wrong” Murphy’s Law (Edward A. Murphy).
- Expect to experience “system failures” in the best of plans. A child wakes up ill, you wake up ill on the day of an important meeting at work, your car breaks down
- Therefore, we need to anticipate those things that might go wrong and develop contingency plans. Is there a family member or neighbor willing to care for your child if the child is too ill to go to day care? Is it cost effective for you to use a sick child service? Can you work at home?
- Develop the contingency plan before the crisis occurs not when you are in the midst of the crisis.

INDIVIDUALIZED WORK /FAMILY MANAGEMENT PLAN (IWFMP)

- Organize family routines. Ease the morning rush by preparing the night before, everyone in the household shares housework, consolidate activities (ie., mealtime can also be communication time). Use a family job list if necessary.
- Include leisure, recreational and respite time in the management plan.
*Care givers must also take care of themselves.
- Develop a family calendar to avoid time conflicts. Post the calendar in a strategic place where everyone can see it.
- Hold regular family meetings to review work/family goals, plans, and progress. Revise plans as needed. Yes, family members need to know what your work goals are so they can support them. People can’t support what they don’t know.
- Organize workplace routines. Break large jobs into smaller tasks and set deadlines for completing each task.
- Make plans to communicate problems and solutions to coworkers and managers. Many times we have ideas for working more effectively but fail to communicate those ideas.



Everyone’s work/family experience is unique and different. Experts and advisors can offer suggestions but everyone must develop his/her own work/family management plan.

Individualized Work Management Plan *Worksheet*

Work Goal #1

Objectives:

A.

B.

C.

Time Frame:

Resources Needed:

Contingency Plan:

Individualized Work Management Plan *Worksheet*

Work Goal #2

Objectives:

A.

B.

C.

Time Frame:

Resources Needed:

Contingency Plan:

Individualized Family Management Plan *Worksheet*

Family Goal #1

Objectives:

A.

B.

C.

Time Frame:

Resources Needed:

Contingency Plan:

Individualized Family Management Plan *Worksheet*

Family Goal #2

Objectives:

A.

B.

C.

Time Frame:

Resources Needed:

Contingency Plan:

Conflict Resolution as a Strategy for Balancing Work and Family

What Is Conflict?

- Conflict can be defined as any struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes or demands.
- As conflict escalates concern for self increases.
- The desire to win increases with a rise in self-interest.
- Nice people can become harmful to others (coworkers, family, etc.) as conflict increases.

What Are Ways To Handle Conflict?

- Approach a conflict with an attitude for finding solutions.
- Examine both sides fairly. Accentuate points of agreement, work from these points first, then tackle points of disagreement.
- Be hard on facts but soft on people. Listen with respect, avoid overreactions, show empathy.
- Examine the balance of power in the relationship where conflict exists:
 - Do we disrespect our children/spouses because we have the power to do so?
 - Are we disrespected by managers because they have the power to do so?
- Confront conflicts as they arise. Conflict left unchecked will magnify the problem.

Facts about Work and Family Life

- In 62% of marriages both spouses work outside of the home.
- Many of today's dual-income families are struggling to maintain the standard of living their parents and grandparents maintained on one income.
- 70% of women with school age children now work outside of the home.
- 20% of working parents also have some responsibility for an aging relative (Families and Work Institute).
- Women still tend to be the primary care givers for children and/or an aging relative.
- The average American woman spends 17 years raising children and 18 years helping aging parents (Newsweek, July 1990).
- Men, however, are increasingly experiencing problems associated with managing work and family life.

WHAT'S MISSING

- Organizational culture that supports the use of work/family programs such as flextime, flexiplace, telecommuting, part-time employment, job sharing and leave sharing programs.
- *Affordable* quality child care and elder care.

RESOURCES

The Work and Family Coalition

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capital Street, NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002
202/962-3200

Executive Baby - Newsletter for Balancing Work and Family
Networking Moms - Directory for building one's own network/support system
Melanie Berry, Editor - 888/492-6832

US Department of Labor
WorkLife Center - 202/219-6741
Employee Assistance Program - 202/219-6857
FPB - 202/219-6857
PSB - 202/606-6646

READING LIST

Complete Guide to Choosing Child Care
Judith Berezin, New York, Random House 1991

Working and Caring
T. Berry Brazelton, Reading, MA, Addison Wesley, 1987

The 36-hour Day -- A Family Guide to Caring for Persons with Alzheimer's Disease
Related Dementing Illness, and Memory Loss in Late Life
Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabin
Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1991

The 1990's Father -- Balancing Work and Family Concerns
Bureau of National Affairs, Washington
Baraff Publications 1989

Working, Families, and Organizations
Edited by Sheldon Zedeck, San Francisco
Josey, Bass, 1992

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families
Steven R. Covey, Audio, 4 Tapes
Covey Leadership Center - 800/304/9788
Available in Local Bookstores

Additional Resources:
Your local library can provide books on many topics from time-saving recipes to stress management techniques.

FAMILY CALENDAR/MESSAGE CENTER						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
MESSAGES/NOTES		THINGS TO REMEMBER		IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS		

AGENDA

Family Meetings

These are the topics we might discuss at our family meetings:

[illegible]

FAMILY JOB LIST

List the tasks you can delegate and the name of the family member who might assume the responsibility:

<u>TASK</u>	<u>FAMILY MEMBER</u>
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____
12. _____	_____
13. _____	_____
14. _____	_____
15. _____	_____